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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 004913

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [IZ](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: IRAQI NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR VISITS JAPAN

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES JOSEPH DONOVAN FOR REASONS 1.4(B),(D)

11. (C) SUMMARY: Iraqi National Security Advisor Dr. Mowaffak al-Rubaie visited Japan August 22-26. In Tokyo he met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Taro Aso, Minister of State for Defense Fukushima Nukaga, and briefed MOFA officials on the situation in Iraq. He also met with press representatives and was the guest of honor at a dinner hosted by the Iraqi Ambassador for members of the Diplomatic Corps. He expressed Iraq's thanks to Japan for their active involvement in their struggle and was generally upbeat about the situation in Iraq, maintaining that progress is being made in bringing security to Baghdad. He was interested in learning more about the U.S.-Japan security relationship and asked for and was provided with a copy of our Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). Rubaie also pressed the Japanese for continued financial assistance. END SUMMARY.

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MEETING WITH FM ASO  
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12. (C) MOFA Iraq desk officer Tomoko Watanabe provided Embassy Tokyo Political Officer with a readout of Rubaie's visit to Japan. According to Watanabe, Rubaie -- accompanied by Iraqi Ambassador Dr. Ghanim Alwan Al-Jumaily -- met separately with FM Aso and JDA Chief Nukaga on August 22 to thank them yet again for the contributions made by Japan's Ground Self Defense Forces (GSDF) in Muthanna Province and for the recently enhanced role being played by the Air Self Defense Forces. He remarked that the GSDF had completed their mission without firing a shot and said they had behaved in Iraq more like angels than like soldiers. Rubaie emphasized that Iraq is at the front line in the global war on terror and needs the continued support of the international community. He also noted that as Iraq's security relationship with the United States matures the Iraqis would like to learn more about the U.S.-Japan security relationship. Aso replied by thanking Rubaie for the reception he received during his successful August 3 visit to Baghdad. He said that Japan will actively support the Compact with Iraq, and that Japan hopes the security situation in Baghdad will improve.

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BRIEFING FOR MOFA OFFICIALS  
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13. (C) Prior to his meeting with FM Aso, Rubaie met with a number of MOFA officials from the Middle East, Intelligence, and Economic Cooperation Bureaus to provide a more in-depth briefing on the current situation in Iraq. He provided them with an update on the Baghdad security plan, stating that calm has been restored to two of seven hotspots in the city and that the plan is to duplicate this effort in the remaining five areas before Ramadan begins. He said security forces have removed politically provocative posters, increased patrols, are working to urge people who fled their

neighborhoods to return, are employing young men to help clean up and beautify the city, and are increasing the hours of electricity available to the populace. The plan appears to be working as the number of daily attacks has started to decrease since July.

14. (C) On the economic front, Rubaie stated that although inflation is up, so too is purchasing power, and that more Iraqis than ever before are now linked to the outside world economically, something that would have been impossible during Saddam's era. Rubaie also presented a summary of the growth and effectiveness of the Iraqi Security Forces, as well as what he called the country's "three and a half" intelligence agencies - the "half agency" being the Ministry of State for National Security. According to Watanabe, throughout his briefing the message that Rubaie continued to emphasize was the effort of the Iraqi government to win the hearts and minds of the people. He repeated several times that it is critical the Iraqi people trust their government and assist it to defeat the insurgents. Rubaie also asserted that the press only prints the bad news, and said the fact Iraq is the only country in the region with a developing democracy makes its neighbors uneasy, especially Syria.

15. (C) According to Watanabe, Rubaie said Iraq is interested in learning from the Japanese about how to manage a more mature defense relationship with the United States, noting that both Iraq and Japan had been occupied by the U.S. following periods of conflict. He was particularly interested in the SOFA between the U.S. and Japan and was, at his request, provided with a copy.

16. (C) For their part, the Japanese asked a number of questions of Rubaie, including about Iraq's national reconstruction plan, debaathification, the role the Sunnis

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are playing in the government, the threat of civil war, and what is being done to counter the threat posed by militias. Rubaie replied that the national reconciliation plan is moving forward and that meetings will be held to bring together leaders from all the various political, religious, and tribal factions. With regard to debaathification Rubaie responded that in principle the concept is sound, but expressed his opinion that it ought be carried out by judicial authorities rather than a political body. On the role being played by the Sunnis, Rubaie said he is hopeful that Sunni politicians can play a greater role in neutralizing the insurgency, but admitted they still have concerns over what type of program the government will be able to offer the insurgents to bring them on board. He downplayed the threat of open civil war, pointing out that 30 percent of Iraqis are intermarried. He dismissed the recent leak of a report by the former British Ambassador which paints a bleak picture as British "domestic politics." On the militia front, Rubaie maintained that Coalition Provisional Authority Order 91 lays the framework for dealing with the militias, but said that Iraq would look to the Japanese for assistance in helping to fund a Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reintegration program.

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ADDITIONAL OUTREACH  
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17. (C) In addition to his official meetings, Rubaie also granted interviews to the press, attended a dinner for members of the Diplomatic Corps hosted in his honor by the Iraqi Ambassador, and visited the cities of Hiroshima and Kyoto. He was accompanied on his visit to Japan by his wife and by two advisors, Hameed A. Ahmed and Rasim M. Hassan. His visit was the subject of several small press stories which emphasized his optimistic view that Iraqi security forces will take control over all of Iraq by the end of the year.

18. (C) Watanabe informed Political Officer that the next senior Iraqi official currently scheduled to visit Japan is Minister of Oil Shahrستاني, who is planning to visit on October 22-23.

DONOVAN